

RED CROSS NORDIC UNITED WORLD COLLEGE

STRATEGIC PLAN

INTRODUCTION TO THE RCNUWC STRATEGIC PLAN

In order to appreciate the rationale behind the RCNUWC Strategic Plan it is necessary to put it into the context of the recently agreed UWC Strategic Plan. Rather than quote extensively from that document the introduction is copied here.

INTRODUCTION TO THE UWC STRATEGIC PLAN

It is nearly 50 years since the United World Colleges were created through the birth of Atlantic College. Development since 1962 has been steady and 13 Colleges now educate more than 6,000 students each year. 1,200 of these students are selected annually through UWC's National Committee system, most of them on some form of scholarship. Most graduates go on to leading universities, often supported by scholarships, or, in the case of UWC's agricultural college, to influential positions in the agricultural sector. Many graduates have risen to senior positions in public life and business and make significant contributions to their professions and their communities. More than this, UWC graduates share a commitment inspired by their UWC experience, to make a positive contribution to society – a commitment to peace, to social change and to making the world a better place.

UWC's mission – UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future – acts as a guiding light for the organisation. It encompasses a commitment to provide an education that will enable UWC graduates to make a difference, as well as a determination to act as an example and an inspiration to other education systems. In particular, it compels us to look beyond the education of each individual student and to see the educational process as a means to the end of a more peaceful and a sustainable world.

The mission is central to all UWC activities. It embraces the original founding idea as well as a contemporary relevance in a world that continues to be scarred by conflict – as often conflict within nations as between them – and where education's role in addressing adverse social and economic situations is ever more important. The clarity of the mission means that it is widely, perhaps even universally, understood within UWC. Naturally, there are different interpretations of how the mission can be implemented, often shaped by local contexts, and this is an important element of UWC's diversity. However, there is common agreement about a set of shared values which are the key ingredients of every UWC experience:

- International and intercultural understanding
- The celebration of difference
- Personal responsibility and integrity
- Mutual responsibility and respect
- Compassion and service
- Respect for the environment
- A sense of idealism
- Personal challenge
- Action and personal example

This commitment to the mission and values leads UWC to be distinctive from other schools, including other international schools, in several ways:

- The Colleges comprise an extraordinary and deliberate diversity of students – of socioeconomic, cultural, racial and religious backgrounds and experience as well as of nationalities.
- A UWC education represents a holistic and transformative approach, the aim being to equip students in every way to be able to take positions of leadership in their communities and to make a positive difference to society.
- A UWC education is viewed as the start of a lifelong commitment rather than a stand-alone education.
- High academic standards are intentionally balanced by a broader experience encompassing

intercultural exchange, international awareness, personal challenge and the development of leadership, responsibility and teamwork.

- A very heavy emphasis is placed on student initiative and leadership.
- A vital part of the experience, reflected in the importance attached to it, is the idea of students being expected to lead by serving others.

The National Committee system is a further unique feature of UWC. Students admitted through this system are selected from within their own communities and cultures by locally-based and usually volunteer-run National Committees. This facilitates the diversity in the Colleges: it provides access to selection in more than 120 countries, and means that students are selected with reference to their particular national contexts. It is also significant that students opt to apply to UWC and to pass through the National Committees' comprehensive selection processes. Since they can be selected for any of the 13 Colleges, this calls for a leap of faith on the part of both the students and their parents.

We believe that UWC's aims remain as relevant now as they were almost half a century ago. The simplicity of UWC's basic premise – of building understanding by bringing a wide diversity of young people to study and serve together – has made it adaptable in a changing world, although it is also clear that remaining relevant will require constant effort and vigilance.

Other schools, including many that deliver the International Baccalaureate curriculum, have sought to emulate aspects of UWC's work. Although this represents success, it presents a new challenge to UWC to maintain its distinctiveness and continue to act as an example. In these circumstances, our profile globally is not nearly as strong as we would want it to be. UWC must refine its ambition, identity and role according to these changing circumstances and in order to attract the level of funding we require to meet our mission and objectives.

In recent years, stronger foundations have been put in place for the UWC organisation as a whole, and this has been accompanied by a greater spirit of unity that can be characterised by the widely shared view that we are all stronger if we work together. That prevailing view provides the context for this strategic plan.

UWC STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure that UWC's model of education maintains relevance and becomes more widely known an example of education for a peaceful and sustainable future.
2. To extend UWC's reach.
3. To strengthen and develop the UWC National Committee system.
4. To create a secure and sustainable financial and funding model.
5. To increase awareness, recognition and understanding of UWC.
6. To continue to strengthen organisational effectiveness and unity.

FURTHER BACKGROUND TO THE RCNUWC STRATEGIC PLAN

Fifteen years ago in 1995 the Red Cross Nordic United World Colleges became the 9th UWC to open. In those 15 years most of the 100 RCNUWC students admitted annually have been selected through UWC's National Committee system while many others have been selected by approved organizations or institutions such as SOS, The British Council and The Chinese Disabled Persons Federation. More than a 1000 of these students have been awarded full scholarships funded by grants from the Nordic governments. Most RCN graduates go on to leading universities, often supported by generous scholarships. The college is young but already we are seeing many of our former students in universities and at the beginning of their careers in public life and business "sharing a commitment to make a positive contribution to society – a commitment to peace, to social change and to making the world a better place", as described in the introduction to the UWC Strategic Plan.

RCNUWC seeks to be distinctive within UWC but shares with each of its sister colleges all the characteristics already outlined in the introduction to the UWC Strategic Plan. The future of the college is to be shaped by its commitment to the UWC mission, its shared values, and its guiding principles implemented in a nordic context. The college will seek to provide an example, for the other UWCs, educational organisations and

governments, of how nordic values can contribute, in a powerful way, to the central mission of making education a force to unite peoples, nations, and cultures for peace and a sustainable future.

The college educational programs are structured around three pillars dealing with environmental issues and action, humanitarian issues and action and nordic society and culture; which remain as relevant and crucial today as they did to the founders in the 1990s. Learning reaches beyond purely academic achievement to include demonstrating global and community responsibility whilst nurturing personal initiative, self-reflection and personal development through living together with respect, integrity and responsibility for self and others.

The plan that follows originated from the UWC plan and aims to put the intentions of that plan into the context of an individual college whilst also adding key sections that relate to this college alone.

RCNUWC STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure that UWC's model of education maintains relevance and becomes more widely known an example of education for a peaceful and sustainable future.
2. To extend UWC's reach.
3. To strengthen and develop the colleges environmental pillar.
4. To create a secure and sustainable financial and funding model.
5. To increase awareness, recognition and understanding of UWC.
6. To continue to strengthen organisational effectiveness and unity.

SPECIFIC RCNUWC STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure that RCNUWC's model of education maintains relevance and becomes more widely known as an example of education for a peaceful and sustainable future.

RCNUWC wishes to develop the potential of students from the widest diversity of backgrounds who will through a combination of intellectual skills, emotional intelligence, responsibility and service to others, be able to set an example, become leaders in their communities and commit themselves to making a positive difference in the world.

RCNUWC also wants its distinctive education model to be better able to provide an example to others. In order to achieve both objectives, we must continue to ensure the quality and relevance of the education we provide. Maintain its commitment to the three pillars which are detailed in the college statutes, namely, the Nordic, the Humanitarian and the Environmental.

To achieve this objective, RCNUWC will:

1. Support National Committees and Colleges to widen access and increase diversity by selecting and admitting students on the basis of their potential as much as on their proven achievements.
2. Cooperate with the other colleges and the International Board of UWC to develop a system of certification or recognition, including a UWC Diploma, that will give recognition to the full scope and distinctive aspects of the RCNUWC experience within the guiding principles of the United World Colleges.
3. Identify and develop appropriate outcome data, research and evidence to support further developments in UWC's educational provision.
4. Monitor the RCNUWC educational model and encourage development which emphasises quality, innovation and relevance.

5. Work with and learn from relevant partner organizations to develop and draw attention to RCNUWC's model of education. Engage with selected organizations whose aims and activities are consistent with the three pillars of RCNUWC.

2. To consolidate and extend RCNUWC's reach

RCNUWC wishes to consolidate and extend its impact in the Nordic Region and further afield and recognizes that this can be achieved in a variety of ways. Given our ambition, we must think of reach and impact in terms of both the number of people coming into contact with a UWC experience, and in increasing recognition and understanding of RCNUWC's system of education.

In order to achieve this objective, RCNUWC will:

6. Define the scope of 'outreach' activities that extend reach and can be brought within a RCNUWC framework.

7. Build on our efforts to establish a new UWC College in China, thus seeking to help UWC grow strategically in order to strengthen the existing organization.

8. Investigate the opportunities and implications of a program of associated and affiliated internationally minded schools within the Nordic Region

9. Investigate the potential for the expansion of RCNUWC activities.

10. Utilise RCNUWC graduates to participate in college initiatives and extend RCNUWC's impact.

3. To strengthen and develop the RCNUWC environmental pillar.

The environmental pillar of RCNUWC needs is seen as a weakness. In addition to proposals already listed earlier in different contexts there is a need for concerted action from all members of the RCNUWC community.

In order to achieve this objective, RCNUWC will:

11. Take the prescribed steps to gain Environmental Certification (Miljøfyrtårn) for the first time.

12. Aim to monitor the total CO2 emissions associated with college operations and set targets to reduce this annually.

13. Aim to reduce energy costs, water usage and travel costs (adjusted for inflation and currency changes) year on year.

14. Development of climate neutral energy supply through a local bio energy plant, which is connected to a National pilot project for Landscape Cultivation, by 2015.

4. To create a more secure, longer term and sustainable financial and funding model

Financial pressures, uncertainties and their consequences represent an ever present restriction to RCNUWC's confidence and continued development. Financial security would mean being able to offer a level of sustained scholarship and project funding that is appropriate to RCNUWC's commitment to diversity and selection on potential and merit.

In order to achieve this objective, RCNUWC will:

15. Review RCNUWC's scholarship allocation model and continue to identify means of delivering

scholarships in ways that meet 100% of need.

16. Give support from the Nordic region to the UWC-wide collective responsibility for global scholarship fundraising.

17. Establish a group of prominent Nordic supporters, donors and others to support capital, and when needed, revenue fundraising for the college.

5. To increase awareness, recognition and understanding of RCNUWC

A strong communications function will ensure that relevant and consistent messages are communicated externally and will also reinforce communications and the value attached to RCNUWC within the UWC organisation. Good communications will offer vital support to our other objectives, but will also ensure that there can be a more widespread and better understanding of RCNUWC's educational model which, given our mission and ambition, is an important end in itself.

In order to achieve this objective, RCNUWC will:

18. Support and implement the UWC family brand strategy in all official college publications and communications.

19. Create and implement an external communications strategy to identify key audiences and to raise awareness of RCNUWC, its part in the UWC mission and its model of education.

20. Participate in ways to further develop an internal UWC communications strategy to foster a strong sense of belonging to the UWC movement.

21. Works with the Norwegian National Committee to seek ways to use UWC's 50th anniversary to raise the profile of RCNUWC in particular and UWC in general.

22. Provide support to enable individual supporters and members to act more effectively as advocates for RCNUWC.

6. To strengthen RCNUWC organisational effectiveness, good practice and unity

All parts of RCNUWC will be stronger if we work together effectively.

In order to achieve this objective, RCNUWC will:

23. Develop strategies, including effective use of technology, as a means of sharing resources and information to bring together all constituencies of the college.

24. Implement agreed codes of conduct for students and for staff in common with all UWC Colleges.

25. Focus on standards and best practice in order to increase quality and professionalism throughout the college.

26. Review and update all procedures and practices associated with Health and Safety regulations and guidelines and the Norwegian Inclusive Workplace Initiative as is required by Norwegian Law.

27. Develop a policy for recruiting and managing volunteers.